

REMARKS

The Applicant appreciates the Examiner's thorough review of the application and the indication of allowable subject matter. Allowance of all claims as amended is respectfully requested.

Although Applicant disagrees with the prior art rejection of record, solely in the interest of expediting prosecution claim 1 has been canceled without prejudice and without disclaimer and claim 3 has been rewritten in independent form. The remaining claims have been amended to depend from allowable claim 3. Claims 2 – 9 and the Specification have been amended according to the Examiner's suggestions on Pages 2 - 4 of the Office Action to overcome the Examiner's objections. The Examiner's suggestions were applied verbatim, except that in claim 3, "characterized in that" was replaced with "wherein" and claim 4 was made to depend from claim 2 instead of claim 3, as claim 2 now depends from claim 3, and claim 3 therefore does not depend from or incorporate the subject matter of claim 2, which was only necessary to provide antecedent basis for claim 4.

Claim 3 was also amended to clarify that the rails are not positively claimed as elements of the claimed coupling system, but are only recited as intended use. This amendment should overcome the Examiner's first rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

Claim 3 was additionally amended to clarify the structural relationship between the elements. The ball bearings press on their opposite key plate members when the rails are aligned as taught, for example, at Page 11, lines 15-18 and 25-27, Page 12, lines 29-31, and Page 13, lines 10-13 of the Specification. The key plate members prevent the gate members from opening when the rails are not aligned and the action of the bolt member opens the gates and locks the coupling parts together, as taught in Pages 6 and 9 – 13 of the Specification. This amendment

should overcome the Examiner's second rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. No new matter was added by the amendments.

Claims 2 – 9 , including independent claim 3, are now pending in the application.

As claim 3 was indicated to be allowable and has been placed in independent form, and as the 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph rejections and the objections have been overcome, and as the remaining claims have been made to depend from independent and allowable claim 3, Applicant believes that all claims are now in condition for allowance. Should the next Office Action be something other than a Notice of Allowance, in the interest of expediting prosecution and disposal of the application, Applicant encourages the Examiner to contact the undersigned at the number given in the signature block to resolve any remaining issues.

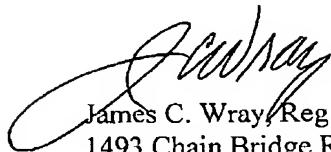
RECEIVED
CENTRAL FAX CENTER

DEC 16 2008

CONCLUSION

Allowance of all claims is respectfully requested.

Respectfully,



James C. Wray, Reg. No. 22,693
1493 Chain Bridge Road, Suite 300
McLean, Virginia 22101
Tel: (703) 442-4800
Fax: (703) 448-7397

Date: December 16, 2008